

WAR DEPARTMENT
BASIC TRAINING
The Alert Soldier

FASTING

Matt 6:16-18 “Moreover, when you fast, do not be like the hypocrites, with a sad countenance. For they disfigure their faces that they may appear to men to be fasting. Assuredly, I say to you, they have their reward. But you, when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face, so that you do not appear to men to be fasting, but to your Father who is in the secret place; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly.”

WARM UP

Fasting has historically been a matter of faith and also a natural means of healing. Many medical practitioners have used fasting to cure all kinds of ailments by cleansing the body of the toxins and poisons that are in our system. In fact you don't starve when you fast but release the blood to cleanse the body and give all your major organs a holiday and a chance to revitalise. One author claims that 90% of diseases can be cured by fasting.

READ Isaiah 58



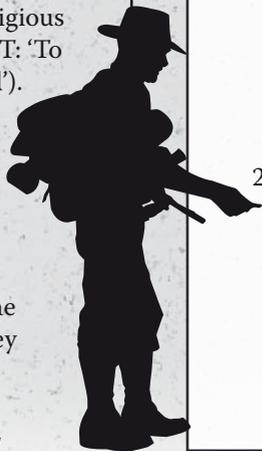
QUESTIONS FOR INTERACTION

1. We know God wants us to fast. He longs for us to seek Him with prayer and fasting. Why didn't God notice this fast?

2. What is the fast that God has chosen?

BACKGROUND

Webster's and also the Bible Dictionary, define fasting as, 'abstinence from food. Especially as a religious observance.' (FAST: 'To abstain from food'). The people of Israel fasted to make themselves heard. To add power to their prayers and get the breakthrough, they sought God.



CONSIDER THIS

The disciples could not deliver a demon possessed boy. Jesus told them that this kind only comes out with prayer and fasting. King Hezekiah was given a life extension after fasting. Esther saved the nation with fasting. Daniel broke through with fasting. Jesus said, "when you fast". Could this help you break through?

3. Read Joel 2:12 and Matt 22:37. If we are to obey the command Jesus gives us here, what part should fasting play in our life?

4. Read Matt 4:1-2 where Jesus fasts. Discuss why Jesus fasted and what was the result?



WRAP-UP Read Acts 13:2-3. What part did fasting play in the New Testament church and should we practise this today?



IT'S TIME FOR PRAYER

RESPONSE AS A PROMISE KEEPER

Realise that you will not die if you fast. It will benefit you greatly in the physical and the spiritual. How would you see fasting as (1) a regular discipline, (2) for emergencies and (3) for important decisions?